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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001798

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, EUR, NEA, PM, IO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/16/2016
TAGS: MARR MOPS PREL LE NL
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/LEBANON: RESPONSE TO UNIFIL
CONTRIBUTION DEMARCHE

REF: A. STATE 134133

¶B. THE HAGUE 1739
¶C. THE HAGUE 1782

Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Chat Blakeman, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Charge delivered ref A demarche August 16 to Laurent
Stokvis, the assistant-secretary equivalent who heads the
MFA's Western Hemisphere division, and left the non-paper
behind. Stokvis said the Dutch were focused primarily on
humanitarian assistance in Lebanon but were "thinking" about
other possibilities. He noted, however, that such
possibilities were few given the large Dutch deployment in
Afghanistan and smaller deployments in Iraq, the Balkans, and
Africa. "We are fully committed" in other missions, Stokvis
said. "We have never been committed so fully." He added
that the new Dutch ambassador in Washington, Christiaan
Kroner, had discussed the situation in the Middle East with
the Secretary during his presentation of credentials August
¶15.

¶2. (C) Stokvis's comments were consistent with what
Ambassador Arnall was told in meetings this week and last
with Prime Minister Balkenende, Foreign Minister Bot, Defense
Minister Kamp, and Chief of Defense Staff Gen. Berlijn (refs
B and C). All suggested that the Dutch were "stretched too
thin" in current operations, and UNIFIL troop contributions
would detract from the GONL's ability to successfully carry
out these missions -- especially in Afghanistan. That said,
these interlocutors told Ambassador Arnall that the Dutch
would consider a small, niche role in the international
force, such as a maritime contribution.

¶3. (C) Embassy will remain engaged on this issue at the
highest level.

BLAKEMAN